



CITY OF CONCORD

REPORT TO MAYOR AND THE CITY COUNCIL

FROM: Matthew R. Walsh, Dir. of Redevelopment, Downtown Services, & Special Projects

DATE: March 9, 2016

SUBJECT: CIP #443: City-wide Multigenerational Community Center

Recommendation:

- Accept the following report.
- Set the attached resolution appropriating the sum of \$6,555,000 for public hearing on April 11, 2016, including \$200,000 in recreational impact fees and \$6,355,000 in bonds and notes. *This resolution is being offered in accordance with City Council vote during its February 8, 2016 meeting for Option 1A (the staff recommended option).*

Background:

1. **Project History:** The concept of a new City-wide community center dates back to 2004. The following is a brief chronological summary of this project since its inception.
 - a. **2004 Feasibility Study:** The concept of a city-wide multi-generational community center at Keach Park dates to 2004. Working with Groundwork Concord, Inc., the City completed an initial feasibility study which recommended that the City pursue construction of a \$7.7 million, 30,350SF facility. The proposed facility would have replaced the existing Heights Gym, which was constructed in 1977. Following the completion of the 2004 study, the City acquired the former Gable properties located at 28 Canterbury Road and 63 Pembroke Road.

Shortly after completion of the 2004 study, the Concord School District announced its intentions to move forward with plan to consolidate its elementary schools. That plan included the closure of Dame School, which was to be replaced with a new facility in East Concord (known today as the Mill Brook Elementary School, which opened approximately 3 years ago). Following the announcement of the District's intentions to abandon Dame School, the City re-examined its plans for a new city-wide community center at Keach Park and elected to pursue a new strategy to acquire the Dame School for this purpose. As a result, the project recommended by the 2004 feasibility study did not move forward.

- b. **2011 Feasibility Study & Acquisition of Former Dame School:** By 2010, the Concord School District had made enough progress on its consolidation plan to give the City sufficient confidence to resume studying the possibility of converting Dame School into a city-wide community center. As a result, in January 2011 the City completed a second feasibility study which specifically examined such options. Led by the HL Turner Group based here in Concord, as well as an architectural firm specializing in such facilities based in Denver Colorado, the project was completed at a cost of \$95,000.

The 2011 effort began with an evaluation of the City's four (4) existing community centers: Green Street, 1977 Heights, East Concord, and the West Street Ward House. That effort determined the City would need to invest approximately \$5.9 million (2011 dollars) in short and long-term improvements in order to keep those facilities viable for recreational use. It should be noted that, with the exception of the 1977 Heights Center, none of the existing community centers were ever purpose built for public recreational use, thereby resulting in practical limitations on how those facilities could be effectively used for such purposes.

The 2011 feasibility study recommended that the City acquire the soon-to-be-abandoned Dame School and renovate it into an 80,000SF +/- facility with an estimated cost of \$11.4 million (2011 dollars). This concept included: demolition of the 1977 Heights Community Center, preservation and renovation of approximately 20,000SF of the existing school building, and construction of a 60,000SF addition featuring a turf field, gymnasium, walking track, several multipurpose rooms, a modestly sized performing arts venue / function hall, and other amenities. The study also recommended that the Parks and Recreation Department offices be relocated from White Park to the new city-wide community center.

The 2011 study also recommended that the City close the East Concord Community Center and West Street Ward House, as recreational programs at those facilities could be accommodated at the new city-wide center. The study recommended that the East Concord Community Center be sold, while the West Street Ward House would be retained for municipal elections and future municipal needs.

It also is important to note that the 2011 feasibility study did not include a branch library nor studio space for Concord TV. At the time, the City, in 2007, had completed a needs assessment for the Library which recommended the construction of a new 40,000SF main library in the downtown. Alternatively, that study also offered concepts for renovating and expanding the existing Green Street facility. Therefore, the concept of a branch library was not germane at the time to the 2011 community center planning process. Similarly in 2011, the need for a second studio for Concord TV was never raised by stakeholders during the planning process.

In accordance with the recommendations of the study, the City entered into negotiations with the Concord School District to acquire former Dame School. The city acquired the property on January 10, 2013 for the sum of \$1 plus other considerations. Shortly after purchasing the property, the Parks and Recreation Department relocated to Dame School and opened the property as an interim community center.

- c. **2014-2015 Schematic Design Process:** Following the acquisition of the former Dame School in 2013, the City Council, as part of the City's FY2014 and 2015 budgets, appropriated \$781,503 to commence final design and bid specifications for design of a new City-wide multigenerational community center at the site of the former Dame School on Canterbury Road.

On April 23, 2014, the City engaged a design team for the project led by the H.L. Turner Group of Concord. The design team also included BH+A (an architectural firm specializing in recreational facilities), as well as Ballard King (a recreational consulting firm specializing in business planning for public and private facilities). BH+A was the lead consultant on the 2004 city wide community center study. Ballard King was involved with business plans and pro formas as part of the 2011 feasibility study.

City staff and the design team met with stakeholders on May 29, 2014, and June 24, 2014, to review the 2011 proposed space recommendations and discuss any potential changes the community may desire moving forward. Focus groups were convened on May 29, 2014 with six stakeholders, including the Recreation and Parks Advisory Committee (RPAC), with the purpose to confirm the findings of the 2011 Needs Assessment and reorient the public with the project after a three year hiatus. A subsequent public forum was held on June 24, 2014. During the City Council's August 2014 meeting, staff reported on the results of the stakeholder input. Following that report, the City Council authorized the City Manager to proceed with schematic design, as well as updates to the 2011 business plan and financial pro forma for the project. That effort got underway in September 2014.

In February 2015, the City Administration presented 3 options, each with an alternate design to include a branch library and studio for Concord TV, to the City Council for creation of a new City-Wide Community center at the site of the former Dame School. Subsequent presentations were made in March and April 2015. Ultimately, 13 different options ranging in cost up to \$17 million were presented to the City Council during February, March and April 2015. After consideration, the City Council rejected all options and directed the City Administration to review scaled down, more economical options for the project.

2. **February 2016 Presentation to City Council:** Last month, in accordance with the City Council's directive from one year ago, the City Administration presented four new options for a potential new city-wide community center at the former Dame School property. Following that presentation, the City Council instructed the City Manager to submit an appropriation resolution for public hearing on April 11th for the staff recommended project option (Option 1A).

Discussion:

1. **Overview of Options:** The following is a review of options presented to the City Council on February 8, 2016. Please see the matrix included as Appendix 1, which summarizes all options for the project. Building sizes and cost estimates provided herein are based upon 10% designs.
 - a. **Option 1:**
 - i. **1A (Gymnasium):** This option preserves and reuses the 1965 wing of the building, as well as the existing cafeteria and kitchen (total of 18,740SF). The remaining portions of the structure would be demolished and a new 11,423SF addition would be constructed featuring a high school size gymnasium and related support facilities. Total building size is 30,160SF. Amenities include 3 multipurpose program rooms, 2 exercise rooms, and 1 senior room. The existing cafeteria would be renovated into a large function hall / multipurpose room. No accommodations for Concord TV are included. The former Gamble property would be demolished. No additional parking is constructed and only minor improvements are made to the existing parking lot. This option would also exclude a turf center.
 - ii. **1B (Turf Center In Lieu of Gymnasium):** Option 1B has all the same features of 1A, with the exception that a new 21,500SF +/- indoor turf field is constructed within a pre-engineered metal building in lieu of a gymnasium. Playing surface would be 180' X 85' (15,300SF). Remaining square footage would be for team seating and runoff space. Spectator viewing would be provided outside of the field house via windows from a lobby area.
 - b. **Option 2:**
 - i. **2A (Gymnasium):** This option preserves and reuses the 1965 wing of the building, as well as approximately half of the 1940s wing of the building (including the existing cafeteria and kitchen). The facility would be approximately 33,377SF (22,098SF (66%) existing building and 11,279sf (34%) new construction). Amenities include 3 multipurpose program rooms, 2 exercise rooms, and 1 senior room. The existing cafeteria would be renovated into a large function hall / multipurpose room. No accommodations for Concord TV are included. The former Gamble property would be demolished. No additional parking is constructed and only minor improvements are made to the existing parking lot. This option would also exclude a turf center.
 - ii. **2B (Turf Center In Lieu of Gymnasium):** Option 2B has all the same features of 2A, with the exception that a new 21,500SF +/- indoor turf field is constructed within a pre-engineered metal building in lieu of a gymnasium. Playing surface would be 180' X 85' (15,300SF). Remaining square footage would be for team seating and runoff space. Spectator viewing would be provided outside of the field house via windows from a lobby area.

- c. Option 3:
- i. 3A: This option would demolish the entire former Dame School building and replace it with a new 33,264SF structure. The former Gamble property would also be demolished. Amenities proposed for this option include 4 multipurpose program rooms, 2 exercise rooms, 1 senior room, as well as a large function hall / multipurpose room. A high school size gymnasium is also proposed. No accommodations for Concord TV are included. The former Gamble property would be demolished. No additional parking is constructed and only minor improvements are made to the existing parking lot. This option would also exclude a turf center.
 - ii. 3B (Turf Center In Lieu of Gymnasium): Option 3B has all the same features of 3A, with the exception that a new 21,500SF +/- indoor turf field is constructed within a pre-engineered metal building in lieu of a gymnasium. Playing surface would be 180' X 85' (15,300SF). Remaining square footage would be for team seating and runoff space. Spectator viewing would be provided outside of the field house via windows from a lobby area.
- d. Option 4: This option would make basic repairs to the existing former Dame School, as well as the existing Heights Gymnasium (total of 47,855SF, combined). Improvements would include: asbestos abatement, demolition of the former Gamble residence, partial roof replacement (1965 wing and occupied portion of 1940s wing), minor parking lot repairs, minor masonry repairs, window replacement, limited HVAC repairs / improvements, as well as limited energy and flooring improvements. Major items not included in this option include a new gymnasium or renovation of the unused portions of the 1940s wing. This option would also exclude a turf center.
- e. Library Services: Identical Library services are proposed for each of the 4 project options. Programming would be conducted in one of the center's multipurpose rooms 15 hours / week. Staffing would consist of 3 Library Techs, 14 hours / week each (42 hours total or 1.05 FTEs). Adult and children's programming would be provided. A limited supply of books would be available on-site; inter-branch loan would also be available. Technology amenities for the public would include 10 chrome books, an I-Pad Air, and Kindle. Books and materials would be stored in a large, purpose built closet in one of the multipurpose rooms. The initial year cost of programming and materials is projected to be \$62,400 (FY2018).
- f. Existing Heights Gym: Cost of demolition has been carried in Options 1, 2, and 3. City Administration plans to explore potential reuse of the facility into a municipal storage facility or potential workshop and equipment storage facility for the Parks and Recreation Department, provided preservation of this structure does not adversely impact design options for the new city-wide community center. Should this scenario move forward, budgeted funds for demolition would be repurposed for renovations. Additional funding might be required pending final plans for the building.

2. Omitted Facilities:

- a. Concord TV Studio: Concord TV currently has a studio at the interim community center which is comprised of 2 former classrooms (1,800SF, total). This studio supplemented Concord TV's operations based at Concord High School.

Recently, Concord TV sent a letter to the City Administration indicating that they plan to vacate the facility. Therefore, none of the options presented within this report include any dedicated space for Concord TV.

While no dedicated studio space for Concord TV is recommended to be part of the new city-wide community center, it is important to note the following:

- i. The new facility will include a service drop which will allow for live streaming of events recorded by Concord TV.
- ii. Subject to availability, Concord TV would be welcome to use one of the facilities multipurpose rooms on a limited basis to film programs. As such, the City Administration is open to including a small storage closet at the facility for storage of Concord TV equipment. This approach is similar to that being proposed for Library Services.
- iii. Lastly, as part of the renewal of the franchise agreement with Comcast, the City has negotiated a payment from Comcast to Concord TV in the amount of \$52,500 / year for 10 years (total of \$525,000) to assist Concord TV.

3. Additional Amenities Explored Per City Council Request: At the conclusion of the February 8, 2016 presentation to City Council, the Council asked the City Administration to explore the following programmatic options.

- a. Interior Turf Center In Lieu of Gym: Mayor Pro Tem St. Hilaire asked the City Administration to explore construction of a turf field in lieu of a gymnasium, specifically by examining the following options:
 - Turf Option #1: A permanent, indoor facility housed within a pre-engineered metal structure, 21,500SF in size, in lieu of a new high school sized gymnasium, featuring an elevated walking track.
 - Turf Option #2: An exterior turf field, a portion of which could be enclosed seasonally with an inflatable "air dome", in lieu of a gymnasium.

City Administration has reviewed these options with the design team and offers the following analysis:

i. Turf Option #1 (Permanent in Metal Building)

1. Construction Cost (Hard & Soft Costs): Please see Appendix 1 which compares gym vs. turf center options. In general, the net new cost to the taxpayers (i.e. General Fund) for a turf center in lieu of a gymnasium would be approximately \$375,000 - \$400,000 more than the gym option annually (operating costs and debt service, after revenues).
2. The City Council will likely recall that in 2015 Ballard Kin provided estimated gross revenues for a 21,500SF turf center at approximately \$350,000, and were based on rental rates of \$100 - \$125 / hour (peak vs. non-peak utilization), which were consistent with the local market. As part of this current effort, staff reviewed those projections and reduced gross revenue estimates to approximately \$205,000, and is based upon 60% paid occupancy and rental rate of \$150 per hour for FY2018. Projected revenues were reduced due to recent changes in the market place; most notably that two potential key partners made alternative arrangements for turf facilities elsewhere during the last year.

Important Observations:

- a. A 21,500SF turf field is not regulation size for any sanctioned sport. (A regulation sized turf field is 112,000SF, or 2.6 +/- acres). Due to its non-regulation size, this facility would have limited utility (and, by extension, revenue capabilities), as compared to a full size field. A facility of this limited size would be best suited for indoor soccer leagues, or as a practice / training facility.
 - b. Cost estimates exclude expanded parking which would likely be needed to serve this amenity.
 - c. During the ensuing year since the City last discussed the possibility of a new community center project, key potential partners / users (Seacoast United & Concord Crush) made alternate arrangements and Seacoast Express Soccer Club built a turf field at the Concord Center on Ferry Street.
 - d. There remains another turf center in greater Concord (Fieldhouse Sports in Bow).
- ii. Turf Option #2 (Seasonal Air Dome): Staff also explored this concept with the design team. Because a 21,500SF field would not meet any standard for sanctioned sports, the City staff modeled the cost of a regulation turf field (112,000SF / 2.6 acres), of which 21,500SF could be enclosed seasonally (likely mid-November through mid-April) with an inflatable air dome. The total estimated cost for the facility, excluding spectator seating, parking lot expansion, or replacement of existing fields to be displaced by the turf facility, would be \$4.2 million. After deducting credits associated with forgoing a new gymnasium, the net new cost for this feature would be approximately \$2.2 million.

b. Alternative Flooring Materials – Gym and Turf Center: Councilor Herschlag asked the City Administration to explore the following temporary flooring options for the gymnasium and turf center:

- Flooring Option 1: Temporary Gym Floor Surface over the Turf Field.
- Flooring Option 2: Temporary Turf Surface over the Gymnasium Floor.
- Flooring Option 3: Although not specifically requested by Councilor Herschlag, City Administration thought it would be prudent to explore a multi-use surface for the proposed gymnasium in lieu of a traditional hardwood floor.

City Administration has reviewed these options with the design team and offers the following analysis:

- i. Flooring Option 1: Temporary Gym Floor Surface Over the Turf Field: Staff, working with the City’s design team, reviewed this option and determined it would not be feasible for the following reasons:
 1. The turf surface would not be a suitable foundation for a temporary gym floor due to its spongy nature.
 2. The weight of a temporary gym floor would likely damage the turf and void manufacturer’s warranties.
 3. Storage needs for modular panels that would comprise the temporary gym floor would be significant.
 4. The size and weight of a temporary gym floor would necessitate significant amounts of labor and equipment to install and disassemble. Because of this, such a system would not lend itself for short-term usage (say for a day or two) due to the significant amount of time and effort needed to assemble and disassemble the temporary floor.
- ii. Flooring Option #2: Temporary Turf Surface over Gym Floor: Staff, working with the City’s design team, reviewed this option and determined it is feasible. However, it is important that the City Council consider the following:
 1. This concept would achieve 4,200SF “field”, plus runoff spaces. Again, this is not a regulation size for any sanctioned sport. Consequently such an amenity would have limited utility and be best suited for indoor soccer or as a practice facility.
 2. The turf surface would be achieved using 2’X2’ (4SF) interlocking turf panels. To cover the entire gym floor (roughly 7,550SF, but varies by design option) approximately 1,888 panels would be required. Assuming a 2 person crew could install / remove 90 panels per hour, it would take 21 hours to install or remove (total of 42 man hours per occurrence). Therefore, such a system is not

practical for “quick changes”, and would likely remain in place for weeks once mobilized.

3. Costs and Revenues:

- a. Capital Cost: \$173,700. Includes turf panels and construction of storage space.
- b. O&M Expenses: Currently unknown, but would be largely driven by labor costs and the number of installations and removals annually. In addition, the City would likely need to invest in a small fork lift / pallet truck to handle panels.
- c. Revenues: Currently unknown, but anticipated to be relatively minor. Also, revenues associated with activities which require a solid flooring surface (like basketball) could be negatively impacted if turf demands conflict with other seasons or standing leagues.
- d. Please see Appendix 3 which summarizes financial impacts of this potential feature.

4. Other Observations / Concerns:

- a. Not regulation size; best for indoor soccer or training facility.
- b. Too cumbersome & time consuming to install / remove.
- c. During the ensuing year since the City last discussed this project, key potential partners / users (Seacoast United & Concord Crush) have made alternate arrangements and built a turf field at the Concord Center on Ferry Street.

iii. Flooring Option #3: Multipurpose Gym Floor In Lieu of Hardwood: Staff has researched this option with the design team and recommends it to the City Council for the following options:

1. A multipurpose flooring surface is less expensive than traditional hardwood (\$10/ SF vs. \$17/SF). For the 3 gym options presented herein, cost savings associated with a multipurpose floor would be around \$53,000.
2. A multipurpose floor is more versatile, and therefore offers more utility for the community for other recreational activities, such as Pickleball and Futsal ball (indoor soccer), while still also being fully functional for basketball and volleyball.

c. Walking Tracks (Gymnasium): Councilor Herschlag also asked the City Administration to explore construction of a walking track within the proposed gymnasium which could be added to Options 1A, 2A, and 3A.

City Administration has reviewed these options with the design team and offers the following analysis:

- i. Elevated Walking Track in Gymnasium: Total estimated capital cost is approximately \$593,000 (design, permitting, construction, and oversight). This option would necessitate construction of an elevator and stair tower.

Users would have to complete approximately 20 laps to achieve 1 mile. Operating costs would be minimal and largely focused on periodic cleaning (cost not presently estimated) and elevator inspections / maintenance (\$5,000 in Year 1). Please see Appendix 3 for a summary of fiscal impacts associated with this potential feature.

- ii. Ground Level Walking Track in Gymnasium: Total estimated capital cost is \$788,000 (design, permitting, construction, oversight); including 10' high netting to protect users from court based recreational activities. This option would require expanding the gymnasium by approximately 2,800SF. Users would have to complete approximately 13 laps to achieve 1 mile. Operating costs, largely related to utilities, would increase slightly due to expanded square footage. Please see Appendix 3 for a summary of fiscal impacts associated with this potential feature.
- d. Walking Tracks (Turf Field): Staff also reviewed the costs to install a walking track within a turf field complex. Like the gymnasium option, staff reviewed the potential for both elevated and ground level tracks, which could be added to Options 1B, 2B, or 3B.

City Administration has reviewed these options with the design team and offers the following analysis:

- i. Elevated Walking Track in Turf Field: Total estimated capital cost is approximately \$853,000 (design, permitting, construction, and oversight). This option would necessitate construction of an elevator and stair tower. Users would have to complete approximately 10 laps to achieve 1 mile. Operating costs would be minimal and largely focused on periodic cleaning (cost not presently estimated) and elevator inspections / maintenance (\$5,000 in Year 1). Please see Appendix 3 for a summary of fiscal impacts associated with this potential feature.
 - ii. Ground Level Walking Track in Turf Field: Total estimated capital cost is \$1,697,000 (design, permitting, construction, oversight); including 10' high netting to protect users from court based recreational activities. This option would require expanding the gymnasium by approximately 6,000. Users would have to complete approximately 8 laps to achieve 1 mile. Operating costs, largely related to utilities, would increase slightly due to expanded square footage. Please see Appendix 3 for a summary of fiscal impacts associated with this potential feature.
4. Funding: The attached resolution provides funding for Option 1A. It does not include funding for a turf center or walking track.

As explained during the February presentation to City Council, available funds remaining from previous appropriations for this project are approximately \$575,000.

Lastly, impact fees from all 4 impact fee districts would be appropriated to help finance the project, as this will be a city-wide recreational facility. Use of impact fees is also

appropriate as the project will provide for expanded recreational facilities to serve the community.

5. Schedule: Should the City Council select a preferred option at its April meeting, staff envisions the project would move forward in accordance with the schedule below.
 - April 11, 2016: Public hearing for appropriation resolution. If approved, commence final design and permitting process, as well as bid specifications.
 - September 2016: Bid construction.
 - November 2016: Commence construction.
 - Fall 2017: Project completed, facility open.

Recommendation:

The staff recommendation for this project is as follows:

1. Recommended Design Option: Proceed with Option 1A (renovation of 1965 wing, cafeteria / kitchen, and construction of a new high school size gymnasium). Staff believes this option is the most prudent for the community because it is the most economical option that meets the City's programmatic needs.
2. Turf Field: Staff does not recommend a turf field, in any form, be included as part of this project. Rather, staff urges the City Council to stay the course with the City's long-term plan to construct a new turf center at Terrill Park, as currently contemplated within the City's Capital Improvement Program (CIP #59, \$4.1 million in FY2022-2025). Terrill Park is a better candidate for a turf center for the following reasons:
 - a. No existing recreational facilities will be impacted or lost by the construction of a turf field at Terrill Park; thereby providing a net gain in recreational assets for the City.
 - b. Terrill Park has sufficient acreage to provide ample parking and other facilities like stadium seating needed to support a turf center.
 - c. Construction of a turf center at Terrill will help reduce nuisance activities which have traditionally plagued the Park.
 - d. A turf field at Terrill will allow the City to make the most of an underutilized waterfront asset.

If desired, the City Council could amend CIP #59 to include a 21,500SF air dome. This would add approximately \$650,000 in 2016 dollars. This would include the dome and storage building, but would exclude design / permitting / construction administration as well as annual operating costs including installation and removal.

3. Temporary Turf and Gym Flooring Options:
 - a. Staff does not recommend pursuing a removable gym floor for any turf field options.
 - b. Staff does not recommend pursuing a removable turf surface for the proposed gymnasium due to capital cost, level of effort to install and remove the surface, as well as very limited recreational utility that such a surface would provide for the community given limited size of the turf surface.
4. Gymnasium Multipurpose Floor: Staff does support constructing the gymnasium with a multipurpose floor in lieu of a traditional hardwood floor. The multipurpose floor would be less expensive than a hardwood floor and provide greater flexibility / utility for other recreational uses.
5. Walking Track: A walking track within the gymnasium is not included in the staff recommended option. Therefore, if the City Council wished to include this amenity, a supplemental appropriation resolution would be required for design and construction (i.e. \$600,000 +/- for an elevated track, \$790,000 for an at-grade track). Staff is neutral to the concept of including an elevated walking track within the gymnasium.